

there is no ultimate order or predictability.

To put it another way, there are laws of nature and laws of karma—but God can at any time completely over-rule those laws. This perception permits both the scientist-devotee and the Hindu or Christian devotee to function without distress in their original belief systems and at the same time to join harmoniously in the worship of Sathya Sai Baba.

On the basis of the foregoing, therefore, I would propose the following as avenues for the further exploration of “belief conflicts”:

(a) fundamentalists of all faiths hold fast to the belief that “God can do anything”—and thus are capable of comfortably encompassing whatever they wish of scientific findings. In fact, it may be that the only thing that really discomforts them is the suggestion that God is not omnipotent—as happened in the case of Darwin’s “Theory of Evolution.” I suggest, therefore, that the persons most likely to turn to a revitalization movement are those who actually find it difficult to continue to believe that “God can do anything.” In other words, among people who have held that belief, it is the loss of belief in divine omnipotence that can most particularly precipitate that sense of “contradiction and disorder” which in turn precipitates a need for “revitalization.”

(b) I agree with Wallace on the cultural pressure for order and structure. As Victor Turner (1964) has pointed out, however, there are certain circumstances when some members of a society turn from “structure” to “anti-structure” and from orderly “community” to potentially order-free “communitas.” Is it possible, therefore, that—when we contemplate the beliefs of the medical or the theologian devotee of Sathya Sai Baba—what we are actually observing is an ideological counterpart of liminality: *There is no order in the universe, there is only God, “who can do anything at all”?*

But if “order” can at any time be suspended or negated, what remains but chaos? I am tempted to go one step further and ask: is structural liminality then also a form of chaos? But that might perhaps take us too far from the issues of this paper.

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REVIEWS

SAC reviews books, films and videos, and other productions related to the anthropological study of consciousness. The Review Editor solicits recommendations for material to be reviewed. Individuals interested in recommending or reviewing material, please contact:

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EVALUATING BIGFOOT VIDEOS AS AN ANTHROPOLOGY TEACHING AID

Whether or not Bigfoot-type creatures exist, utilization of this topic for classroom discussions on various mainstream anthropological issues (e.g., evolution and early hominid development, rules of evidence, folklore and mythology) can evoke enthusiastic, often polemic responses. Unfortunately, anthropologists have shown remarkably little interest, at least publicly, in this subject. In providing an overview of available Bigfoot videos, we will identify those which may serve as potentially valuable learning aids.

Some anthropologists may believe that Bigfoot has no place in the classroom. But to reject its appropriateness as a legitimate study topic is ethnocentric, and denies the significance of studying, because of the fantastic nature of the claims, a vast array of supernatural beings which are thought to inhabit virtually every society on earth. What would have happened if early anthropologists had downplayed or abandoned the import of animistic beliefs or shamanically conjured entities, predicated on the Western notion that such beings were imaginary? Why should Bigfoot be any different just because reports are prevalent in Western society? In fact, it is especially apposite for Western anthropologists to use examples that most students can relate to. Since most anthropologists do not appear knowledgeable on the subject, and often lack time to screen the various Bigfoot-related audio-visual materials which are frequently of dubious integrity, this review is intended to assist in selecting the appropriate item for an instructor's particular needs. All materials reviewed are in color, and can be obtained from selected distributors.

The Legend of Boggy Creek, 1972 (87 min. Pierce-Ledwell). This excellent phenomenological perspective on Bigfoot sighting in the vicinity of Fouke, Arkansas, “from the native's point of view,” includes a series of interviews and re-creations (usually with original witnesses) of local “encounters.” Despite a low budget and imperfect cinematography, this film has homey charm, and is at times gripping in its realism. It documents how a small community can periodically become overwhelmed with rumors and reports, and should dispel the notion that witnesses are often deviant or crazy. Unfortunately, the film lacks a wider geographical perspective, but it is good for what it is: a local ethnography of period sighting influxes. It should not be confused with *Return to Boggy Creek* (1977),

a fictional sequel.

Monsters! Mysteries or Myths? 1974 (52 min. Smithsonian Institution). This television special narrated by Rob Serling, judiciously weighs evidence for and against Bigfoot, the Abominable Snowman, and the Loch Ness Monster, providing detailed analyses of the 1967 Patterson and the 1969 Marx films. This comprehensive overview is lucid and concise. The Loch Ness segment can be easily edited for non-topicality.

The Legend of Bigfoot, 1975 (80 min. Palladium). This is an uncritical, highly speculative, autobiographical docu-drama of Ivan Marx's numerous "encounters" including an extensive presentation of his purported films of the creature. Its length and narrow subject treatment preclude it from more than marginal use.

Sasquatch, 1957 (94 min. North American Film Productions). Contrary to claims that it documents "the complete story of the legendary creature" after seven years of research, this film is virtually worthless. It is a docu-drama, poorly acted, boring, tangential, and almost wholly fictitious.

Bigfoot: The Mysterious Monster, 1975 (80 min. Shick Sun Classic). This comprehensive, thought-provoking documentary provides a worldwide perspective, and is interspersed with re-enactments. Superbly narrated by Peter Graves, the evidence for Bigfoot is scrutinized as in a court case through interviews with scientists, including many anthropologists. Evidence is examined on many levels (footprints, hair, feces, vocalizations, eye-witness accounts, hypnosis, polygraphs, motion pictures, psychic mediums). The famous Allan Berry incident is inaccurately re-enacted, and the infamous Minnesota "Iceman" is scandalously implied to be a genuine Bigfoot; except for those shortcomings, this film is carefully researched.

In Search Of... This television series, narrated by Leonard Nimoy, has made four Bigfoot programs, each providing a concise introduction to different aspects of the mystery. Produced by Alan Landsburg, each segment is about 22 minutes long, well-suited for classroom presentation since they can shown individually or in combination. *Bigfoot* (1977) overviews North American Sasquatch reports, showing interviews with Dr. Grover Krantz and researcher Peter Byrne who debate ethics versus pragmatism in killing a specimen to prove its existence. *The Monster Hunters* (1978) examines the life of Loch Ness investigator Tim Dinsdale, and follows the activities of the Bay Area Group which conducts periodic Bigfoot expeditions in the Pacific Northwest. The video contains footage of the 1978 International Bigfoot Conference at the University of British Columbia, and interviews skeptic zoologist Dr. William Montagna. *Swamp Monsters* (1979) discusses the persistent "monster" sightings on Honey Island, a remote 27 thousand-acre Mississippi delta bayou in Louisiana. The video presents speculation on how such a creature could survive (e.g., diet, hunting habits), interviewing researcher Holland Ford and naturalist George Stevens. *The Abominable Snowman* (1979) is an historical examination of the large, hairy bipedal hominids reputed to inhabit the Himalayas, interviewing Everest climbers who claim to have observed the Yeti, seen its tracks, or heard its vocalizations.

In the Shadow of Bigfoot, 1982 (85 min. Amazing Horizons). This documentary features extensive footage of the dubious Ivan Marx films. Researchers travel to various "hotspots": across the U.S. revisiting famous sighting locations and interviewing locals. The film is uncritical, and some of the

evidence is deliberately altered to enhance credibility. However, because it includes coherent interviews with the late anthropologist Dr. Warren Cook, the film is marginally useful. Cook discusses why he believes the controversial Marx films are genuine, and later, why *Australopithecus boisei* is the best candidate for contemporary Sasquatch sightings. The film includes a brief interview with Dr. Gary Levine, who believes Bigfoot to be a psychic manifestation.

Secrets & Mysteries, 1982 (22 min.). The Bigfoot segment from this television series contains in depth interviews with researchers Peter Byrne, John Green, and Dr. Grover Krantz, focusing on whether Bigfoot needs to be shot to be proven.

Adventure: Search for the Yeti, 1988 (60 min. BBC Bristol). This is the best documentary on the subject to date, tailor-made for anthropologists, and teeming with ethnographic detail. This intelligent, inspiring, culturally sensitive examination of the Abominable Snowman legend follows mountaineer Chris Bonington's three-month trek through restricted sections of the Tibetan Himalayas. The film looks at the impact of the Yeti on the local culture, and provides scores of interviews with indigenous inhabitants and Western witnesses.

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Gilbert Herdt and Michele Stephen, eds. *The Religious Imagination in New Guinea*. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1989. ISBN 0-8135-1458-4. Hardcover \$48.00. Paperback \$16.00. Pp. 262.

The Religious Imagination in New Guinea is a special treat to be enjoyed and savored by the serious student of the anthropology of consciousness. The editors and the authors of the case studies are to be thanked for the way they each combine ethnographic data that are analyzed and related with considerable sophistication to theories drawn from psychology, anthropology, and other disciplines. The result is a valuable contribution to Melanesian studies, the study of religion, and the study of consciousness.

The book begins with a brief introduction by the editors that places the papers in the context of a developing literature on the study of religion on the one hand, and the ethnography of New Guinea on the other. This is followed by two theoretical essays, one on the "Self and Culture," by senior editor Gilbert Herdt, and the other on "Self, the Sacred Other and Autonomous Imagination," by junior editor Michele Stephen.

I must admit that while I thought the book was excellent, I was not impressed by either of these so-called theoretical essays. Although many readers may find them fascinating, for me they represent a kind of philosophical speculation which is empty and unsatisfying because it is grounded neither in ethnographic data nor cultural context. While beliefs and imagination about the spiritual world of the peoples anthropologists study fascinate me, I find much less interest in the speculations of those who do the studying. The thoughts